ATTACHMENT - REMARKS

Considering the matters raised in the Office Action in the same order as raised, appropriate headings have been added to the specification along the lines of the suggested guidelines. Further, the specification has been corrected at page 6, line 18. The Examiner is thanked for pointing out the error in question.

The drawings have been objected to "as failing to comply with 37 C.F.R. § 1.84(p)(4) because reference character '42' has been used to designate both calciner and means for staged addition of fuel." The error here actually concerns the typographical error in the specification wherein the calciner was given the reference numeral "42" in one instance. Correction has been made. No correction to the drawings is necessary.

Turning to the objection to claim 4, the clerical error in claim 4 has been corrected. Again, the assistance of the Examiner is appreciated. It is noted that additional, very minor changes have been made in the claims to eliminate the recitation of reference numerals and to use American English spellings (e.g., --characterized-- rather than "characterised").

Turning to the rejection on prior art, Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7-15 and 17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Samant et al (Samant) in view of Rother et al. (Rother). This rejection is respectfully traversed although the claims have been amended so as to even more clearly distinguish over the cited references. Specifically, claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 10 and claim 12 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 17.

Briefly stated, the independent claims, as amended, provide that the catalytic converter is a catalytic converter for reaction of NO with CO.

Turning to the references, it is respectfully submitted that Samant does not disclose a precalcination stage and Rother does not teach the use of a catalytic converter. Moreover, with all due respect to the Examiner, Samant does not disclose a catalytic converter for the reaction of NO with CO.

Considering the cited references in more detail, in order to avoid CO in the exhaust gas of the calciner, Rother uses what is referred to as staged combustion. Accordingly, the basic teaching in Rother is to introduce tertiary into the upper region of the reaction chamber by means of pipe 7b in order to establish an oxidation zone 14 and thus guarantee that the remaining fuel particles will be burnt.

It should be noted that the CO content in the calciner is actually very useful in reducing NO in the calciner. In this regard, with the aid of the catalytic converter provided in accordance with the present invention, it is possible to maintain a higher content of CO in the exhaust gas of the calciner than usually is the case, in order to provide better NO reduction within the precalcination stage (see, for example, page 7 of the specification).

For at least the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 and 12, as amended, patentably define over the references relied on in rejecting the claims. Moreover, the dependent claims are patentable for at least these reasons as well.

Accordingly, allowance of the application in its present form is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: November 19, 2008

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